

15 Prime Cuts - Deadline Edition

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This week, I weigh in with my thoughts on what we can expect to see on deadline day, offering my thoughts on what will happen with the 10 most sought after players.

(for a full review of our Fantasy Hockey Trade Deadline coverage, [click here](#))

1. I think the Hensky signing was a really good move for the Oilers. Sure, giving a raise to a player on pace for less than 10 goals sounds asinine, but the term makes perfect sense for Edmonton. Hensky's deal is for two years – it won't interfere with any extensions needed for the three young stars up front. He didn't receive any sort of protective clause, meaning trading him wouldn't be all that difficult. And most importantly, he's a really good player (when healthy, of course). I am usually quite critical of Edmonton's management, but they made a good move here.

2. Don't forget – cap space is an asset. This often gets lost in the craziness of deadline day.

3. It sounds like the Predators are going to be very, very aggressive tomorrow. And why not? This is likely their last kick at the can with Rinne, Suter, and Weber all on one team. Martin Erat is having a really good season, but they would love to add at least one more forward who can score some goals. David Jones would be a really nice fit – could do a lot of what Joel Ward did for them last spring (different players, but both can score goals and play at both ends of the ice).

4. I'm expecting Dallas to be busy, too. Not sellers, not buyers, but setting the table for the future. They have an owner committed to spending money, and they have a core to build around – Daley, Goligoski, Benn, Eriksson, and Lehtonen.

5. Does San Jose make a desperation move to shake things up? Can they still win with their current core? Doug Wilson has to be on the hot seat a bit, especially with the awful hockey the Sharks have been playing all month long.

The trade targets...

10. Jason Garrison – Florida. The NHL's second leading goal scorer among all defensemen is likely to be on the move, as he and the Panthers are very far apart in contract negotiations. Florida may keep him in order to help with the playoff push, but they would be foolish to not listen to offers from other clubs. Garrison isn't a proven asset, but he's dependable and can chip in with offense. I'd bet he is on the move.

9. The goalies – most notably Josh Harding, Evgeni Nabokov, and Jonathan Bernier. Who gets moved? It sounds like the Islanders really want to re-sign Nabokov. Harding doesn't have the upside of Bernier, but he'd be a more realistic trade target for the several teams who need help. Harding to Toronto? Would the Wild have interest in Luke Schenn? Bernier has a ton of upside, and Jonathan Quick has established himself as one of the best in the world. LA may do what Vancouver is doing and wait until the summer to figure out their goaltending situation.

8. Andrei Kostitsyn – Montreal. Kostitsyn has gone on record saying he would take less money to remain in Montreal. The Habs are out of playoff contention (not officially), and could fetch a few nice assets for the impending free agent. Nashville is an obvious fit – they would

love Kostitsyn's offense, and his brother is already there.

7. Paul Stastny – Colorado. I'm not really sure why his name continues to surface in rumours, but the Avalanche could handle losing him more this year than in the past, thanks to the rapid improvement of Ryan O'Reilly. Stastny is a solid player who does a lot of things well, and he's a proven top line center. His cap hit is high, and it is likely any team that acquires him would have to move some salary back. Toronto would have been a great fit last summer, but they'd be in tough to fit him in to their salary structure (unless Grabovski is moved out).

6. James van Riemsdyk – Philadelphia. The Flyers may use their best trading chip to land a big fish. There is a reason why so many teams covet the big young winger – his upside is immense. He'd be a nice centerpiece of a Nash trade. There are not many other players around the league the Flyers would be willing to part with him for.

5. Steve Ott – Dallas. The highly sought after agitator could just as likely stay in Dallas as be traded. He is very versatile, and his offense is a part of his game many people forget about. Vancouver has heavy interest, as do the Flyers. Dallas, as I mentioned above, isn't a buyer or a seller. They would only move a veteran like Ott (or Ryder, or Ribeiro) in a trade that nets them a proven, but younger, NHL asset.

4. Derek Roy – Buffalo. Arguably the most disappointing player in the league this year has been on the trade block for a while. Buffalo has enough undersized, skilled forwards. Roy plays

a tenacious game (or at least he has in the past), but he's been below average – at best – for much of this season. There are a few teams who would love to slide him in on their second line (Chicago would be a great fit). I think he's on the move, too.

3. Lubomir Visnovsky – Anaheim. The only issue with Visnovsky is that he has one more year on his current contract. He's one of the best puck movers in the game and would improve a lot of power plays around the league. The Ducks are in the middle of their annual late season heroic playoff push, but they could fetch a nice return for Visnovsky. Cam Fowler and Justin Schultz (the best defenseman in college) will be running the power play in Anaheim for the next decade.

2. Dustin Brown – LA. Even before his hat trick on Saturday, the Brown rumours made little sense. Perhaps Dean Lombardi wanted to light a fire under his team. Or perhaps he is trying to create a team with 12 centers on it? Brown is a natural right wing on a team without many of them. Don't expect him to be moved (although a Brown and Bernier for Nash trade would be interesting...). He is signed to one of the best contracts in hockey.

1. Rick Nash – Columbus. I can't see the Blue Jackets holding on to Nash through the trade deadline. He has made his wishes very clear, and it would be a toxic situation to have a lame duck captain and superstar playing down the stretch. As I have said before, cap space is an asset, and moving Nash's \$8 million salary would give GM Scott Howson a lot of flexibility to (hopefully) improve his squad. The Rangers and the Flyers make the most sense – contending teams, and both have the assets to land a Nash type of player.